

Section 25-3-5

Commissioner to provide seminars for unemployed or underemployed employees regarding their rights and responsibilities; commissioner authorized to assist employee groups, communicate with creditors, etc.; state credit union may expand field of membership if adversely affected by layoffs or closings; regulations concerning financial disclosure and assistance of employees.

(a) In order to assist employees who become unemployed or underemployed as the result of a substantial layoff at or the closing of any plant or industry in Alabama, the Commissioner of Labor is hereby directed to establish a procedure to provide such unemployed or underemployed employees with seminars concerning their legal rights and responsibilities regarding their debts, to provide written material which deals with these problems and offers appropriate suggestions to such workers and to meet with management at such plants or industries and with labor organizations or other organizations including such employees in an attempt to minimize the financial burden on such employees.

(b) The Commissioner of Labor is authorized to assist and organize cooperative efforts of such employees or groups to which such employees belong in an effort to minimize the adverse impact of such plant or industry layoff or closing upon such employees and the Commissioner of Labor is further directed and authorized, to the extent he deems advisable, to engage in whatever other acts or agreements which are appropriate to assist financially such employees and groups made up of such employees, provided that the Commissioner of Labor is not authorized to require any employer or employee group to involuntarily contribute to a fund or involuntarily take any other action towards such a goal.

(c) If deemed advisable by the Commissioner of Labor, the Commissioner of Labor shall assist a plant or industry which closes or has a substantial layoff in endeavoring to communicate with the creditors of its unemployed workers concerning the financial difficulty caused to its ex-employees by such layoff or closing. If there is a substantial layoff at a plant or industry or if there is a closing of a plant or industry and if a state chartered credit union includes within its field of membership the employees of such plant or industry, then the board of directors of such state chartered credit union shall determine whether such layoff or closing has adversely affected the credit union. If the board of directors determines that such layoff or closing has adversely affected the credit union, then such credit union may include within its field of membership persons residing in the general geographic areas surrounding the plants or industries served by such credit union. Any such expansion of the field of membership of such credit union shall not be denied or restricted by any provisions of the law of Alabama heretofore enacted. Any such credit union shall endeavor to assist all such unemployed members by granting them extended periods within which to pay indebtedness owed to the credit union, to the extent deemed advisable by its board of directors.

(d) In order to stabilize the share and deposit base of credit unions which may or could be affected by plant or industry closings or by substantial layoffs, any credit union which includes in its field of membership employees of any particular company or companies shall be authorized to accept shares and deposits from such company or companies,

subject to such terms and conditions as the board of directors of the credit union may establish, and such company or companies may become a member of the credit union, subject to such terms and conditions as the board of directors of the credit union may establish.

(e) The Commissioner of Labor is further directed and authorized to issue regulations, to the extent he deems advisable, concerning the instances in which employees at plants or industries which have been closed or have been the subject of substantial layoffs and organizations which include employees of such plants or industries may make appropriate disclosures of the financial situation of such employees and may assist the creditors of such workers in locating them and in arranging voluntary payment plans for their debts; provided however that nothing contained in this section shall be construed so as to authorize any activity which violates any federal act or regulation.

(Acts 1983, No. 83-590, p. 922.)